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NEW PATTERNS

for Christian Work

in **JAPAN**





A rural pastor experiments with bees as a possible source of income for the rural center connected with his church.

bringing them to self-support within five years. The *Rural Evangelism* program is an attempt to reach the farmers, demonstrating that Christians are good neighbors who share their knowledge of the soil along with their religion. Emphasis is placed on centers for leadership training in rural areas. Dairying, new farm methods, the use of farm machinery are taught in schools set up for this purpose. *Occupational Evangelism* reaches into mines and factories, and into fishing villages, teaching the meaning of Christian impacts on labor unions, the dignity of work, and the importance of the individual in a Christian social order. The Christian emphases in

High school students from a village church hold street services to bring the Christian message to their fellow students.



home and family life are spread through women's organizations in the Church. Remote places, hospitals, and shut-ins are reached through the publication of Christian newspapers, radio evangelism, and planned house to house visitation.

Youth

The United Church stresses a program among its young people that aims at the development of Christian leadership, the establishment of Christian homes, the understanding of community and world problems and Christian approaches for the solution of these problems. The program is organized around a central youth commission that is linked with a youth department in each of the fourteen districts.

Since at least 70 per cent of the United Church membership consists of young people, youth participation in local church activities is extensive. Leadership training for such activities is lacking, however, and training for pastors in methods of using young people effectively is greatly needed. The work among students in such Student Christian Centers as those in Sendai, Tokyo, Kobe, and Kyoto helps to prepare students for local church leadership, as does the present program of the Youth Commission.

The younger members of the Church join in youth caravans and summer camps. They regularly teach in Sunday schools and daily vacation Bible schools. They give free labor toward rebuilding churches, hospitals, roads, and community playgrounds, working in the international work camps sponsored by the World Council of Churches. There were four such work camps during the summer of 1955. One participant in a recent camp says, "This experience gave us a wonderful opportunity for study, worship, service, and fellowship—a real chance for growing together. We are convinced that the work camp program is one of the most valuable and fruitful ventures being carried out by the Japanese Church."

Education

From the time of their earliest beginnings Christian churches in Japan have been interested in education as a means of spreading the Christian message. Today the United Church sponsors a system of Christian schools that covers all grades of education. These United Church-related schools include more than 800 kindergartens and nursery schools with some 30,000 children in attendance. Out of 73 church-related school foundations for high school, college, and university education, 56 are United Church-related. Over 115,000 students are enrolled in these schools.

There are specialized schools such as the Oral School for the Deaf, where children handicapped by deafness are taught to speak, and the Rakuno Dairy College where cheese and butter making, the production of new varieties of dahlias, and hog breeding are all parts of the curriculum. Christian workers are trained in theological seminaries and special training schools for kindergarten and nursery school teachers.

Outstanding experiments are being made today in the field of re-education of teachers. Refresher courses, in-service training institutes, extension courses, and since 1954 a summer conference for dormitory matrons have been most successful. All these together with the growing International Christian University are making contributions in leadership training for the Church and the nation.

Social Work

Through its Social Work Committee the United Church of Christ is related to numerous social service projects. Many of these have been opened since the war in answer to some specific need seen by ministers and laymen or by missionaries. Such projects include orphanages where hundreds of children live in a Christian atmosphere and homes where widows and the handicapped may learn to become self-supporting. There are day nurseries for the children of working mothers and other institutions of longer standing such as community houses and hospitals established and served by Christian doctors and nurses. In one such hospital in Tokyo which serves a very low income group, 235 babies were born in December 1954. Two hundred babies would be a conservative monthly average for this hospital. The hospital charge is made to fit the income of the patient. Through such agencies the United Church shows a growing sense of responsibility for the whole of society.

WORLD OUTREACH

Since 1945 the United Church has grown rapidly toward maturity. This is evidenced not only by the change from an inward emphasis on organization to an outward emphasis on evangelism but also by a growing participation in the ecumenical movement. "Ecumenical" was a key word in the 1954 General Assembly of the United Church. It has become an adopted word in the United Church vocabulary. The United Church of Christ in Japan is a charter member of the newly organized Asia Council of Ecumenical Mission. It is cooperating with the Church of Christ of Okinawa by furnishing personnel to assist in setting up a model kindergarten and training center in Naha and by furnishing scholarships for Okinawan students in theological seminaries in Japan.

THE INTERBOARD COMMITTEE

To cooperate with the program of the United Church is the privilege of the Interboard Committee for Christian Work in Japan. The Interboard Committee is made up of representatives from ten foreign mission agencies of eight North American Churches:

Congregational Christian Churches
Churches of the Disciples of Christ
Evangelical and Reformed Church
Evangelical United Brethren Church

The Methodist Church
Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A.
Reformed Church in America
United Church of Canada

The organization of the Interboard Committee was an experiment in united church action. It has proved itself of value both to the North American churches that compose it and to the United Church in Japan. Cooperation is effected through two channels, finances and workers. Yearly estimates for financial aid needed are sent to the Interboard Committee headquarters in New York. These estimates are compiled by the Council of Cooperation, the cooperating body in Japan. This Council is composed of twenty-five representatives from the United Church agencies and ten missionaries, one from each of the ten cooperating North American boards. All

Morning prayers open every Christian kindergarten, teaching the children the importance of daily worship.



funds for Christian work in Japan collected through the eight affiliated denominations are channeled through the Interboard Committee to assist in the program of evangelism, education, and social welfare of the United Church. The annual budget of the Interboard Committee approximates two million dollars.

Missionaries are sent to the field in accordance with requests from the United Church. The Interboard Committee is the agency through which these requests come and are answered. On the field the missionaries receive their appointments from the United Church of Christ and work as a part of that body. There are 400 missionaries from the ten member boards of the Interboard Committee working in all parts of Japan in close connection with the Japanese pastors and the leaders of the churches. Through the United Church and the Interboard Committee the cooperating missionaries are bound together in a new kind of Christian experience which cuts across denominational lines. It is an experience in new patterns of sharing in which the members of each cooperating church in North America may have a part. New patterns create new insights and new fellowships to the enrichment of the Church both here and in Japan.



The minister and the missionary win the confidence of miners by taking part in the daily routine of the mines.



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In the years since 1945 we have come to live in a new world. We even have a new vocabulary. We talk of television and cinemascope, of jet planes and jet streams, and of atomic energy. All of these make new patterns for daily living in a changing world. The Christian Church around the world remains firm in its faith and in its message, but in the face of change, it has sought and found new patterns for its witness. In Japan a United Church with cooperative support from North American churches is one of the new patterns for Christian work.

THE COUNTRY

As a nation Japan stands on the threshold of the atomic age and looks ahead with uncertainty and fear. Many things combine to make her conscious of her strategic place among the nations of the East. Her population of almost 90,000,000 must be supported on a land area just slightly larger than the United Kingdom or Italy but smaller than France, an area approximately the size of the state of Montana. Only 15 per cent of the land is arable, making the import of food stuffs a necessity. Although the majority of the population lives in rural areas, the nation is well organized. Each person even in the remotest areas is a registered citizen and is educated by compulsory law through the elementary grades. In spite of her large rural population Japan leads the East in industrialization and the production of electric power. Her position is strategic because she is the stepping stone between Communist frontiers and the democratic West. Her future is problematic because she is dependent on the outside world for raw materials and financial backing in her economic advance.

In the face of a troubled present and an unpredictable future the minds of the Japanese are restless and uncertain. The experience of defeat in war has led them to desire a lasting peace. In spite of a new constitution repudiating war, world instability pushes the nation toward rearmament. The young people face grave problems of adjustment in a world of changing customs and weakened spiritual values. Unrest breeds crime and juvenile delinquency. While the standard of living and the economic level rise because of contacts with the outside world, moral values become obscure and materialism becomes a substitute for religious faith.

THE CHURCH

The Christian Church in Japan is alive to the conflicts and the fears that beset the minds of men. It is alive to its mission as a living witness to the redemptive and creative force of the Living Christ in the minds and lives of all men, as individuals

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and in community. The United Church of Christ was organized as a new pattern for more effective witness. This Church, called the *Kyodan* in Japan, comprises approximately 70 per cent of the Protestant constituency. Fifteen years ago the more than thirty denominations represented in the United Church were separate Christian bodies, working independently. Today they are one body, a living unit, witnessing through united effort. The United Church functions through central committees with divisions in fourteen districts. There are 160,000 members, 1,500 churches with 1,200 clergymen. The present moderator of the United Church says that the districts are growing in unity and intensity of fellowship and that younger ministers are being placed in positions of leadership. Every effort is being made to make the Church vital in its response to the problems of the day.

THE PROGRAM OF THE CHURCH

Evangelism

The year 1959 will be the centennial of Protestant Christianity in Japan. For five years leading up to that time the United Church of Christ is emphasizing evangelism. Through its program of *Pioneer Evangelism* the Church reaches out into areas untouched by Christian influence. New churches are organized with the idea of



This widow of a Kyodan pastor preaches on Sunday, conducts a kindergarten, and exerts a strong Christian influence in her community.

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The Interboard Committee

FOR CHRISTIAN WORK IN JAPAN

Member Agencies

Representing the Congregational Christian Churches:

AMERICAN BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS FOR FOREIGN MISSIONS
14 Beacon Street
Boston 8, Massachusetts

Representing the Churches of the Disciples of Christ:

UNITED CHRISTIAN MISSIONARY SOCIETY
222 Downey Avenue
Indianapolis 7, Indiana

THE EVANGELICAL AND REFORMED CHURCH:

Board of International Missions
1505 Race Street
Philadelphia 2, Pennsylvania

THE EVANGELICAL UNITED BRETHREN CHURCH:

Department of World Missions
1409 Knott Building
Dayton 2, Ohio

THE METHODIST CHURCH:

Division of World Missions
150 Fifth Avenue
New York 11, New York

Woman's Division of Christian Service
150 Fifth Avenue
New York 11, New York

THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN THE U.S.A.:

Board of Foreign Missions
156 Fifth Avenue
New York 10, New York

THE REFORMED CHURCH IN AMERICA:

Board of Foreign Missions
156 Fifth Avenue
New York 10, New York

THE UNITED CHURCH OF CANADA:

Board of Overseas Missions
299 Queen Street West
Toronto 2 B, Canada

Woman's Missionary Society
412 Wesley Building
Toronto 2 B, Canada

THE INTERBOARD COMMITTEE FOR CHRISTIAN WORK IN JAPAN

Room 1115—156 Fifth Avenue, New York 10, N. Y.